

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NEW DE 02814 260554Z

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01

IO-11 /069 W

----- 011507

R 250940Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4234

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FOLG TELE RPTD FOR YOUR INFO. QUOTE.

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EO 11652: NA

TAGS: PFOR PINT IN

SUBJECT: MRS GANDHI'S CONTINUING ATTACKS ON "CERTAIN FOREIGN COUNTRIES"

1. DURING HER VISIT YESTERDAY TO KOLHAPUR, NANDED AND AURANGABAD IN MAHARASHTRA STATE, MRS GANDHI POINTEDLY ATTACKED THOSE COUNTRIES WHO SUPPORTED PAKISTAN DICTATORS AYUB AND YAHYA KHAN DURING PAKISTAN'S CONFRONTATIONS WITH INDIA.

2. NUMEROUS BOMBAY DAILIES DIRECTLY QUOTED MRS GANDHI'S SPEECH IN KOLHAPUR IN WHICH SHE REFERRED TO "THESE COUNTRIES" BY DECLARING THAT "I NEVER DID CARE, DO NOT CARE, WILL NOT CARE FOR THESE NATIONS." SHE STRESSED THAT THESE COUNTRIES DID NOT CRITICIZE PAKISTAN FOR ITS MASS KILLINGS IN BANGLADESH YET WERE CRITICIZING INDIA FOR ARRESTING A "FEW" PEOPLE. MRS GANDHI ALSO EMPHASIZED THAT THESE COUNTRIES HAD EAGERLY SUPPORTED DICTATORS IN PAKISTAN AGAINST A DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT IN INDIA.

3. AT NANDED DURING THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE PROPOSED KALMMAWADI DAM ON THE DUDHGANGA RIVER, MRS GANDHI STATED THAT THOSE COUNTRIES

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WHO HAVE NEVER SYMPATHIZED WITH INDIA IN THE PAST WERE BACKING

THE OPPOSITION IN THE COUNTRY. SHE FURTHER STATED THAT "THESE FOREIGN COUNTRIES" WERE AIDING THE OPPOSITION IN ATTEMPTING TO WEAKEN INDIA DURING A DIFFICULT PERIOD. AT THE DAM SITE, MRS GANDHI ALSO ALLEGED THAT INDIANS LIVING ABROAD WHO MALIGNED THE COUNTRY DID SO BECAUSE "THE FACT IS, THEY DO RECEIVE MONEY FOR SUCH CRITICISMS". MRS GANDHI STATED THAT MUCH FOREIGN CRITICISM OF INDIA WAS RESULT OF NOT APPRECIATING THE PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE COUNTRY.

3. IN AURANGABAD AT A MASS RALLY ON THE CITY'S MAIDAN MRS GANDHI RETURNED TO THE ATTACK OF CERTAIN FOREIGN POWERS WHO HAD SUPPORTED DICTATORSHIPS AGAINST AN OBVIOUSLY DEMOCRATIC REGIME IN INDIA. SHE ALSO ATTACKED FOREIGN CRITICISM OF INDIA FOR PUTTING "SOME RESTRICTIONS" INTO EFFECT IN THE INTEREST OF THE COUNTRY AND FOR HYPOCRITICALLY SUPPORTING REAL DICTATORSHIPS WHILE ATTACKING INDIA AS AUTOCRATIC.

4. COMMENT: THERE WAS NO MENTION OF ANY PARTICULAR COUNTRY OR AGENCY IN THESE SPEECHES BUT AS "BLITZ" NOTED A FEW WEEKS AGO WHEN SHE MADE SIMILAR REMARKS, THE IMPLICATION IS OBVIOUS. MRS GANDHI'S CRITICISM OF FOREIGN COUNTRIES SEEMS TO BE REACHING A NEW LEVEL OF INTENSITY. BY CALLING FOR THE PEOPLE TO IGNORE CRITICISM AND EXPLICITLY STATING HER INDIFFERENCE TOWARDS THESE COUNTRIES, MRS GANDHI SEEMS TO BE CLOSING THE DOOR TO ANY FURTHER DISCUSSION OR ACCOMMODATION WITH CRITICAL FOREIGN PRESS. ALTHOUGH THESE SPEECHES WERE FOR PUBLIC CONSUMPTION, THE CONSISTENCY WITH WHICH MRS GANDHI TURNED TO THIS SUBJECT ON THIS TOUR POINTS TO HER CONTINUED USE OF FOREIGN THREATS AS JUSTIFICATION AND SUPPORT FOR HER POLICIES OF DOMESTIC REPRESSION.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: INTERVENTION, NATIONAL SECURITY, SPEECHES, EMERGENCY PLANNING
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 25 FEB 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: saccheem
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976NEWDE02814
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760071-1051
From: NEW DELHI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760215/aaaaamew.tel
Line Count: 93
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: saccheem
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22 JUL 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <22 JUL 2004 by coburnhl>; APPROVED <05 OCT 2004 by saccheem>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MRS GANDHI'S CONTINUING ATTACKS ON "CERTAIN FOREIGN COUNTRIES"
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, IN, (GANDHI, INDIRA)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006